Pre-U and Pearson A Level in Chinese Comparison Grid

Although not exhaustive, this grid is designed to give a comparative overview of the *Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Chinese (spoken Mandarin/Cantonese) and the* discontinued *Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate in Mandarin Chinese*.

At Pearson, we have a comprehensive support package in place to help you navigate our qualifications, plan effective teaching and learning strategies, and ultimately enable students to achieve the outcomes of which they are capable.

	Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate in Mandarin Chinese	Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Chinese (spoken Mandarin/Cantonese)
Language	Only available in Mandarin, simplified characters	Available in Mandarin and Cantonese, traditional and simplified characters
Themes and Topics	**6 Topic areas:** • Family • Young people • Education • The media • Work and leisure • Equality of opportunity	**4 Themes (with 2 sub-themes each):** • Changes in contemporary Chinese society • Chinese culture • Evolving Chinese society • The impact of reform and opening up in 1978 on China
Vocabulary	Approx. 1500 words are included in the core vocabulary list, inclusive of prior learning vocab and Grammar list. Approx. 200 terms are included in the topic-specific vocabulary sections. A separate Chengyu list is included in the syllabus. Characters outside of the vocab list may appear on the question papers but will not be tested explicitly. Where these appear, they will be glossed in English.	There is no set vocabulary list but a grammar list is provided.
Grammar	Incorporated into the vocab list.	Comprehensive and separate to vocab list.

Breakdown of Papers	
Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate in Mandarin Chinese	**Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Chinese (spoken Mandarin/Cantonese)**
4 papers: Paper 1: Speaking (20%) Paper 2: Listening, reading and translation (30%) Paper 3: Paper 3 Writing and usage (25%) Paper 4: Paper 4 Chinese culture (25%)	**3 papers:** Paper 1: Listening, reading and translation (40%) Paper 2: Written response to works and translation (30%) Paper 3: Speaking (30%) **Note:** Chinese culture is integrated in the papers
Listening, reading and translation paper	
• 2 hours 30 minutes • 60 marks • 30% weighting • 4 sections • **Section 1:** Listening, 30 minutes (20 marks) • **Section 2:** Reading, 45 minutes (18 marks) • **Section 3:** Chinese sayings (Chengyu), 15 minutes (6 marks) • **Section 4:** Translation, 60 minutes (16 marks) • Questions on the listening and reading passages are written and answered in English • Dictionaries are permitted	• 2 hours • 80 marks • 40% weighting • 3 sections • **Section A:** Listening, approx. 50 mins (30 marks) • **Section B:** Reading, approx. 50 mins (30 marks) • **Section C:** Translation into English, approx. 20 mins (20 marks) • Questions on the listening and reading passages are written and answered in English • Dictionaries are not permitted
Writing paper	
• 2 hours • 60 marks • 25% weighting • 3 sections • **Section 1:** Radical and stroke order skills, 5 minutes, and use of grammar markers, aspect markers and measure words, 10 minutes (10 marks) • **Section 2:** Letter writing, 30 minutes (20 marks) • **Section 3:** Opinion essay, 1 hour 15 minutes (30 marks) • Dictionaries are permitted	• 2 hours 40 minutes • 120 marks • 30% weighting • 3 sections • **Section A:** Translation into Chinese, approx. 30 mins (20 marks) • **Section B**: Written response to works (literary texts) (50 marks) • **Section C:** Written response to works (films) (50 marks) Note: Students may either answer two questions from Section B or alternatively one question from Section B and one from Section C (1 hr 10 mins) • Questions are written in both Chinese and English. Students must write their answers in Chinese. • Dictionaries are not permitted

Speaking paper	
• Approx. 15 minutes • 60 marks • 20% weighting • 2 sections • **Section 1:** Prepared topic and topic conversation (5–7 mins), based on research on a topic of candidate's choice. • **Section 2:** General conversation (6-8 mins) • Dictionaries are not permitted	• Maximum 23 minutes, including 5 minutes prep time • 72 marks • 30% weighting • 2 tasks • **Task 1:** Discussion on a Theme (6–7 mins) • **Task 2:** Independent research presentation (2 mins) and discussion (8–9 mins), based on a topic of candidate's choice • Dictionaries are not permitted

Assessment Objectives and Grading

	Cambridge International Level 3 Pre-U Certificate in Mandarin Chinese	Pearson Edexcel Level 3 Advanced GCE in Chinese (spoken Mandarin/Cantonese)
AO1	**33%** Understand and respond to written texts and spoken material	**20%** Understand and respond: • in speech to spoken language including face-to-face interaction • in writing to spoken language drawn from a variety of sources
AO2	**32%** Manipulate the target language accurately in spoken and written forms to demonstrate a capacity to choose appropriate examples of lexis and structures.	**30%** Understand and respond: • in speech to written language drawn from a variety of sources • in writing to written language drawn from a variety of sources
AO3	**12%** Select information and present it in the target language and in English, organising arguments and ideas logically	**20%** Manipulate the language accurately, in spoken and written forms, using a range of lexis and structure
AO4	**23%** Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of aspects of Chinese society.	**30%** Show knowledge and understanding of, and respond critically and analytically to, different aspects of the culture and society of countries/communities where the language is spoken.
Grading	Nine-grade scale: Distinction 1, 2, 3 Merit 1, 2, 3 Pass 1, 2, 3	Six-grade scale from A* to E, in addition to unclassified grade U

Summary of Comparison

- The Assessment for the A Level is governed by the Department for Education and is comparable to other major language A Levels.
- The A Level caters to a wider range of learners, covering Cantonese speakers and traditional characters in addition to Simplified Mandarin Chinese.
- Culture of Chinese-speaking communities is integrated into the teaching and assessment material in the A Level.
- The A Level assumes prior knowledge of the GCSE vocabulary list.
- The A Level includes a separate Grammar list which is comprehensive for assessment purposes.
- Like the Pre-U, the A Level requires candidates to respond in English to listening and reading assessment questions.
- Like the Pre-U, the A Level speaking paper entails an independent research element and discussion. The A Level Speaking assessment is slightly longer with a higher overall weighting. Candidates would complete the discussion on a theme before their independent research presentation.
- The A Level Writing paper contains more optionality than the Pre-U, with candidates required to study two of a choice of 6 works (literature and film), in addition to a choice on which questions to answer. In the Pre-U, a choice of 3 works is given, of which candidates would choose one.
- The A Level Writing paper has a higher emphasis on response to Chinese-speaking film and literature, and does not focus on accuracies in the technical side of writing (e.g. radicals and stroke order skills).
- Chengyu are not assessed as a separate component in the A Level.
- The use of dictionaries is not permitted in any part of the A Level Chinese assessment.